



Le Cateau

Community Primary School

20th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: COVID-19, School Closure and Critical Worker Definition

As you are fully aware, school will **CLOSE** to the vast majority of pupils at the end of the day (Friday 20th March 2020) **until further notice.**

As per the Government update; ***As a country, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus.***

I am writing to provide you with an update on the current situation and to provide clarity around the term 'critical worker' and what this means for a small minority of pupils.

The stance from the Government is this;

Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be. Please, therefore, follow these key principles:

- 1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be. THIS IS THE KEY PRIORITY***
- 2. If a child needs specialist support (EHCP), is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.***
- 3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.***
- 4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.***
- 5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.***

The Government has stated that schools will provide children who fall into one of two categories, with **reduced childcare.** It is important to note that this is childcare **NOT** education/taught sessions.

Children will be allocated a place if their parents are "***critical workers***" or if they are classed as being "***vulnerable***". If only one parent is a "critical worker", the Government will expect the other parent to have the child/ren at home and are therefore **not entitled** to a place.

Single parents who are 'critical workers' will be entitled to a school place.

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“Vulnerable” children are those with an Educational Health Care Plan or those with an allocated Social Worker.

Following discussions with Headteachers across the Garrison and with The Garrison Headquarters, we have been provided with very clear information. We recognise that the reality is that all Catterick Garrison Units are or will be committed to COVID-19; or are in the process of deploying on Operations (ie 4 SCOTs to Afghanistan in April). However, we have been reassured that all Units will be directed to press soldiers, with partners at home, to keep their children out of school. We also know that some personnel have been placed on short term readiness (48 Hours) and are therefore able to offer short term care for pupils until they are called upon.

It is vital that parents engage in conversations with their place of work to ensure flexibility is put in place. It is a reasonable request that shift patterns are carefully arranged and managed to ensure pupils can be kept away from school to prevent the spread of the virus. Places of work must recognise that this is a directive from the Government to prevent further escalation of the pandemic.

Critical Worker/Vulnerable Pupil

As part of this communication, I am asking parents to submit an email to admin@le-cateau.n-yorks.sch.uk confirming if you believe you meet the criteria (Appendix 1) and have no alternative provision to ensure children remain away from school. This information will be reviewed by myself and Senior Leaders. If the criteria is met then we will confirm that a place is available for your child/ren starting on Monday morning (23rd March).

If we deem that a request does not meet the criteria then we will request additional information or notify you that a place **WILL NOT** be granted at the present time. Examples of this are soldiers on readiness but not actually assigned a role or shop workers who can undertake a different shift pattern. Our response to these emails may not be actioned today – please be patient with this.

Please note, we are **not able** to offer this provision to those who do not fit the categories outlined by Government. We are not anticipating anyone trying to take advantage of the current situation, however, if we feel this is the case, your child will be sent home and, after seeking advice, we will take any further action we deem necessary.

What have we done so far;

- ✓ All children have been set work by their class teacher and provided with a list of websites. You will be able to contact your child’s teacher through the SeeSaw account.
- ✓ Additional Learning at Home packs have been distributed to each individual pupil.
- ✓ Individual families of pupils deemed ‘vulnerable’ or in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan have been contacted by Mrs Maxwell/Mrs Cafferty to discuss support and provision.

What are the next steps;

- ✓ We are collating information regarding pupils entitled to Free School Meals and will co-ordinate this via telephone
- ✓ For families that meet the set criteria, we will open on Monday morning to provide non-educational provision.
- ✓ The Breakfast Club facility will be available from 7:30am at the usual cost for those pupils who meet the eligibility criteria. Bookings must be made in line with the current procedures.
- ✓ We are able to offer extended care until 6:00pm through PT After School Care. This is **ONLY** for pupils who meet the eligibility criteria. If you require this facility then bookings for this must be made using the normal channels - <https://www.ptchildcareclub.co.uk/>
- ✓ We require parents to notify us via the above email address if you believe you meet the set criteria. If we do not receive a response by the end of the school day and believe you do meet the criteria then we will attempt to phone individuals to gather the information.

Although this is a challenging time for everyone, the ultimate aim is to prevent further escalation of this virus. Pupils are carriers of this virus and we have seen a large number of pupils displaying the symptoms. It is important that we work together to prevent this spread and require everyone to play their part.

As it stands, we do not know when schools will be reopening. This is unsettling for all. Teachers will continue to work; either at home preparing learning at home activities or by assisting with school-based provision. This will be carried out on a rota basis and a Senior Leader will be present each day.

To ease any concerns, please keep visiting our Facebook and Twitter pages and check for updates on the school website. Teachers will also be in communication via Seesaw and this can be used as another form of communication. We will also be using the school email account at; admin@le-cateau.n-yorks.sch.uk and will respond to any queries as quickly as we can. This is a vital service that we will provide given the community we serve and the potential for increased activity for service personnel. We recognise that more support may be required if this situation continues to worsen. The Garrison Headquarters know we will do anything we can to ensure we battle this virus and to support any individual.

Finally, I wish to thank you for your understanding and patience during this difficult time. I want to thank you for the supportive messages that have been shared and for the help we have received – cleaning, delivering learning packs, baking and just generally being supportive. I must also thank all of my staff! They have been amazing – they are fully committed to supporting each individual child at this extremely challenging time and have gone above and beyond to make sure we can support.

Please stay safe and ensure you consider your own health, that of your immediate family and everyone else.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Ian Mottram
Headteacher

Appendix 1

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Health and social care

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

This includes childcare, support and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.

Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response, or delivering essential public services, such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies.

Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

Public safety and national security

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

If workers think they fall within the critical categories above, they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

If your school is closed, then please contact your local authority, who will seek to redirect you to a local school in your area that your child, or children, can attend.

We are grateful for the work of teachers and workers in educational settings for continuing to provide for the children of the other critical workers of our country. It is an essential part of our national effort to combat this disease.